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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT Acts of Persecution Against the
Catholic Church

PLACE 25X1

ACQUIRED

DATE OF INFO.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

25X1 This [] intends to give a summary of some of the acts of persecution which have been perpetrated against the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia during the summer of 1950.

25X1 a. Acts of Persecution. The Communist regime continues to imprison Catholic priests. Most of them are sentenced in an "administrative" fashion without the benefit of trial. During the summer at least ten priests have been jailed. The following are examples:

- 1) Father Francis Horvath, Chancery Official of Sarajevo, who has been in bad health, has deteriorated so much since his arrest that he could hardly be recognized by a fellow priest who saw him in prison and was later released. Father Horvath was kept in the UDBA prison for several months and then sentenced to three years. It is doubted if he will survive the sentence.
- 2) Father Michael Pavosic, of the Archdiocese of Zagreb, known as a great favorite among the youth, was jailed. He was also a teacher of religion in the schools.
- 3) Father Kozelj, a Jesuit Father of Zagreb, was arrested for the second time and sentenced in an administrative way to three years of hard labor. He is now working on the roads. Father Kozelj is acknowledged to be the foremost preacher in Yugoslavia. He was first arrested after he had preached to a throng of over 3,000 men in Church. The charge was illegal gathering of people.
- 4) Father Nicolaus Kamineckjy and Father Gregorious Viljak, two priests of the Oriental Catholic Church, have been arrested and are still held incommunicado. The two priests were neighbors and cared for the spiritual needs of five parishes in Bosnia.
- 5) Father Louis Vrnak died in the prison of Maribor. During the winter the priest was kept in a cell without heat or windows. Food packages and warm clothing sent regularly by friends never reached the prisoner. When death came, the priest weighed scarcely more than 48 kilograms.

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- 6) Father Rade Jerkovic, of the Diocese of Split, died in the UDBA prison after being detained for a month. Authorities were quick to explain that death came as a result of a heart condition. Those who knew the priest state that he was in perfect health at the time of the arrest; it is felt that the priest died as a result of the treatment received at the hands of his jailers. The authorities forbade any solemnity in connection with the dead priest's burial, and it was also forbidden that any ceremony take place in the parish where he served his people.
- 7) In the Backa area about two hundred Sisters were forced to leave their homes which were confiscated by the Government. These Sisters now have only two houses staffed by few Sisters. Even these few face eviction. They have been told to leave the convent, remove the religious dress, and find jobs "useful to the State."
- b. Acts of Discrimination. The majority of the Sisters who still live in communities are without ration cards. Most of the seminaries are without cards. In the entire city of Fiume there is not one priest, Sister, or seminarian who possesses a ration card. Priests in prison are discriminated against and made to do all types of menial labor and revolting tasks.
- c. Acts of Paralysis. It is thought that the Communists realize that they cannot destroy the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia, so they have set about to paralyze it. A new and paralyzing move on the part of the Communists is to call priests to military service. This type of military service consists in loading ships, cutting wood, et cetera. Many of the priests called have already served their term of duty. Others are above the age of service. During the summer about fifty priests were compelled to leave their parishes and perform this special service. In the Diocese of Split about twenty pastors were taken from their parishes at the same time for this service. A move of this type means that thousands of the faithful are left without priests. Due to the shortage of priests, it is impossible to care for the spiritual needs of the priestless parishes. Most of the qualified men have been removed from the Chancery Offices and the teachers of Religion have been reduced to an insignificant status. In the city of Zagreb only three priests are permitted to enter the schools and teach religion.

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